

Effective September 22, 2016, BHDDH has adjusted the rates paid to Developmental Disability Organizations to support wage increases for frontline workers employed by these organizations.

What is the purpose of the rate change?

Direct Support Professionals play a critical role in the ability of the individuals they support to reach their goals and be successful. They deserve competitive wages and benefits, but have not received a wage increase in many years. The rate increase being implemented by BHDDH will support wage increases for these dedicated frontline workers and help ensure high-quality services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Who will the rate increase benefit?

The rate increase will support wage increases for frontline, direct-service workers employed at Developmental Disability Organizations (DDOs) licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals. This category includes Direct Support Professionals and Job Coaches (a specific type of Direct Support Professional).

How does the rate change work?

BHDDH has changed the base rate paid to DDOs for units of service provided by Direct Support Professionals. Specifically, the hourly rate assumption for Direct Support Professionals has changed from \$11.55 per hour to \$11.91. DDOs will use the rate increase to provide pay raises for their workers. In addition, the rate increase for Direct Support Professionals has resulted in an automatic rate adjustment for some other categories of professionals, such as Support Coordinators.

Does this mean that all Direct Support Professionals employed by DDOs will now receive \$11.91 an hour?

No, because the rate increase covers both hourly wage increases and associated fringe benefits for employees. The actual pay raises that workers receive may vary by agency, depending on the agency's current pay scale, overhead costs, and other factors.

How will the State track the use of the funds to ensure that they are going to frontline workers, as the budget intended?

The State has a process in place to ensure that DDOs are using the rate increase to provide raises for their employees. Agencies are required to submit payroll documentation for the month before and after the rate increase showing that all Direct Support Professionals they employ have received a pay raise.

How is the rate increase funded?

The FY17 budget includes approximately \$5M to fund these wage increases.

When did the rate increase take effect?

The rates are effective retroactive to July 1, 2016 & a mass adjustment was processed for the pay cycle 9/30/16 for all claims billed and paid through the 9/23/16 billing cycle.